WHAT IS CLAIMED:

- 1. A method for compressing digital content from a source, using a compression scheme selected from a group of available compression schemes, storing the compressed content at a central location, and retrieving the compressed content at a remote location, comprising the steps of:
 - a) at a remote location, prompting a user for and validating a user name and password;
- b) at a remote location, reading the source and prompting a user for tracks to be compressed, the user then identifying selected tracks;
- c) at a remote location, prompting a user for a compression scheme to be used to compress the selected tracks, the user then identifying a selected compression scheme from a group of possible compression schemes;
- d) at a remote location, compressing the selected tracks using the selected compression scheme;
- e) transmitting each selected track after compression through a communications link to a central location;
 - f) storing each selected track in a digital content database at a central location; and
- g) at a remote location, retrieving tracks from the digital content database through a communications link to the central location.
- 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of identifying the source and validating the source's identity against an authorization database at the central location.
- 3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of prompting the user for the quality of compression to be used with the selected compression scheme.
- 4. The method of claim1, wherein the digital content is music.

- 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the digital content is video.
- 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the source is a compact disc.
- 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the source is a digital video disc.
- 8. The method of claim 1, wherein the communications link is the Internet.
- 9. The method of claim1, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of streaming the digital content for replay to a remote location.
- 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of storing the retrieved digital content at the remote location.
- 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of managing the digital content database from the remote location.

- 12. A method for compressing digital content from a source, using a compression scheme selected from a group of available compression schemes, storing the compressed content at a central location, and retrieving the compressed content at a remote location, comprising the steps of:
 - a) at a remote location, prompting a user for and validating a user name and password;
- b) identifying the source and validating the source's identity against an authorization database at the central location;
- c) at a remote location, reading the source and prompting a user for tracks to be compressed, the user then identifying selected tracks;
- d) at a remote location, prompting a user for a compression scheme to be used to compress the selected tracks, the user then identifying a selected compression scheme from a group of possible compression schemes;
- e) at a remote location, compressing the selected tracks using the selected compression scheme;
- f) transmitting each selected track after compression through a communications link to a central location;
 - g) storing each selected track in a digital content database at a central location; and
- h) at a remote location, retrieving tracks from the digital content database through a communications link to the central location.
- 13. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of prompting the user for the quality of compression to be used with the selected compression scheme.
- 14. The method of claim12, wherein the digital content is music.
- 15. The method of claim 12, wherein the digital content is video.

- 16. The method of claim 12, wherein the source is a compact disc.
- 17. The method of claim 12, wherein the source is a digital video disc.
- 18. The method of claim 12, wherein the communications link is the Internet.
- 19. The method of claim12, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of streaming the digital content for replay to a remote location.
- 20. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of storing the retrieved digital content at the remote location.
- 21. The method of claim 12, further comprising a step of managing the digital content database from the remote location.

22. A method for compressing digital content from a source at a client, using a compression scheme selected from a group of available compression schemes, storing the compressed content at a central server, and retrieving the compressed content at a client, comprising the steps of:

at the client:

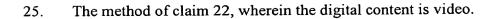
- a) prompting a user for and validating a user name and password;
- b) identifying the source and validating the source's identity against an authorization database at the server;
- c) reading the source and prompting a user for tracks to be compressed, the user then identifying selected tracks;
- d) prompting a user for a compression scheme to be used to compress the selected tracks, the user then identifying a selected compression scheme from a group of possible compression schemes;
- e) compressing the selected tracks using the selected compression scheme;
- f) transmitting each selected track after compression through a communications link to the server;

at the server:

g) storing each selected track in a digital content database at the server; and

at the client:

- h) retrieving tracks from the digital content database through a communications link to the server.
- 23. The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of prompting the user for the quality of compression to be used with the selected compression scheme.
- 24. The method of claim 22, wherein the digital content is music.



- 26. The method of claim 22, wherein the source is a compact disc.
- 27. The method of claim 22, wherein the source is a digital video disc.
- 28. The method of claim 22, wherein the communications link is the Internet.
- 29. The method of claim 22, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of streaming the digital content for replay to a client.
- 30. The method of claim 22, wherein the step of retrieving the digital content further comprises a step of storing the retrieved digital content at the client.
- 31. The method of claim 22, further comprising a step of managing the digital content database from the client.